St. Petersburg, Florida
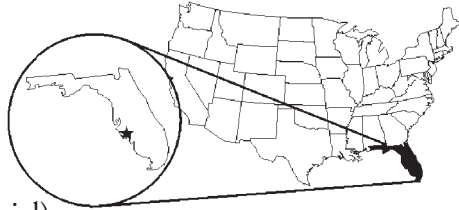

Population Rank: U.S. .... # 68
Florida ...... # 4

Proportions: 11:18 (official)

Adopted: 17 February 1983 (official)

DESIGN: St. Petersburg's flag has five equal horizontal stripes of orange, red, green, dark blue, and medium blue, separated by white fimbriations. In the center, stretching from the top to the bottom edge, is a large white pelican in partially transparent silhouette, perched on a rock and facing the hoist.

SYMBOLISM: Red and orange are for St. Petersburg's abundant sunshine, green for the land, and the blues for the waters of Tampa Bay and the Gulf of Mexico that surround the city. The pelican, indigenous to the area, represents the environmental concerns of the citizens.

HOW SELECTED: In 1983, city officials determined that the old city logo (the city seal) was not easily reproduced or recognized by the public. They commissioned the city illustrator to design a new logo, a rectangle, which was also adopted as the city's flag.

DESIGNER: Ronald F. Whitney, Jr.

MORE ABOUT THE FLAG: Research by the city concerning the effectiveness of the flag/logo as seen by the public shows widely popular acceptance. The pelican has become something of a city mascot, which has translated into a "Feed the Pelican Fund" to provide food for the endangered brown pelican during the winter months.

FORMER FLAGS: St. Petersburg's first flag was adopted on 14 July 1927 after a contest supervised by a committee named by Mayor C. J. Maurer. The committee consisted of Ernest Kitche (the public works director who had initiated the idea of a municipal flag), Commissioner R. C. Purvis, and Lillian Moore. No monetary prize was offered, the city deeming that it would be sufficient honor to have one's design chosen as the city's flag. Not surprisingly, there were few entrants in the contest, which was won by Betsy Ross Flag Co. of Newburgh, New York.

The design finally chosen was a vertical tribar of equal blue, gold, and blue stripes, with the city's seal (adopted 11 July 1921) in the center. The seal has a beveled edge resembling a rope. A smaller concentric circle within the seal's edge forms a ring around the seal. On the ring's white field **CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA** arches clockwise over the top half, and **RE-INCORPORATED A.D. 1903.** curves counterclockwise below. The color of the letters is not specified, but is likely dark blue. In the seal's center, on the hoist side, is a white pelican perched on a post, facing the hoist. On the fly side is a green palm tree, growing from the base of the seal. The foreground shows a sandy

beach, probably golden yellow, with a white seven-petaled poinsettia lying at the base of the palm tree. From the beach to the horizon line, the horizontal midpoint of the seal, is the blue ocean. Above, between the pelican and the palm tree, is a gold sun, reflected in the water below. The sky is probably a light blue. An official mayor's flag, with the colors of the stripes reversed, was also adopted.

By 1951, Mayor S. C. Minshall and city council were unhappy that the city's name was not featured prominently on the flag. On January 16 of that year, the city council passed a resolution amending the 1927 ordinance *to provide that the flags have the words* **St. Petersburg, Florida** *in a crescent over the seal and the words* **The Sunshine City** *in a reverse crescent under the seal, the letters to be 2 to 3 inches in height, and to be in navy blue on the City Flag and in yellow on the Mayor's flag.*

The new flag design was never made. A flag manufacturer notified the city that he could not make an attractive flag according to the new specifications, and presented a different design in miniature form that converted the vertical tribar to a horizontal one, with nearly the same colors: dark blue, yellow, and dark blue. The seal remains on the center stripe. On the top stripe, in large gold letters is **ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA**, taking up most of the space on the stripe. On the blue stripe below, in a large gold script, is ***"Sunshine City"***. The proportions are 4:7. A provision was initially made for the mayor's flag to be in reverse colors, but this idea was later abandoned, with the declaration that one city flag would serve all the city's needs. The horizontal design was adopted on 17 April 1951.

JP 〔flag icon〕